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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE; NEA/SA/EX FOR RICHIE; DEPT FOR
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SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: ONE IDF SOLDIER KILLED IN THE WEST
BANK -- APRIL 26, 2005 (1300 HOURS LOCAL)

This is a joint ConGen Jerusalem/Embassy Tel Aviv cable.

11. (SBU) Summary: An IDF soldier died April 25 near Halhoul village, north of Hebron, after being run over by a Palestinian motorist. Other IDF soldiers at the roadblock opened fire, killing the driver, identified as Iyad al-Duwaik. An IDF investigation is ongoing; PA security sources said that the driver had no political affiliation and that they believed the incident was a traffic accident. A Palestinian youth handed over a 13-kilogram explosive belt to IDF soldiers near Itamar settlement, near Nablus, April 25. A total of 18 Palestinians were arrested overnight in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, PA police clashed with PIJ members in Dayr al-Balah camp April 25. According to reports, PA police attempted to search a vehicle driven by a member of the Abu Rish Brigades and suspected of carrying weapons. Armed clashes broke out, but no injuries were reported. The police brought the situation under control and confiscated the vehicle and its contents. End Summary.

West Bank

12. (SBU) ATTACKS/SECURITY:

-- Deaths: According to Israeli and Palestinian sources, an IDF soldier died April 25 near Halhoul village, north of Hebron, after being run over by a Palestinian motorist April 25. Other IDF soldiers at the roadblock opened fire, killing the driver, identified as Iyad al-Duwaik. The IDF opened an investigation to verify the motive behind the incident. PA security sources said the driver had no political affiliation and that they believed the incident was a traffic accident.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, IDF troops entered Qalqiliya in the morning of April 26, and arrested 16 Palestinians (11 subsequently released, 5 still detained, three of whom suspected of Hamas membership).

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian media, the IDF arrested two Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) militants in Jenin, April 25.

13. (SBU) SECURITY INCIDENTS:

-- According to Israeli sources, a Palestinian youth handed over a 13-kilogram explosive belt to IDF soldiers near Itamar settlement, near Nablus, April 25.

14. (SBU) INCURSIONS/CONFISCATIONS:

-- According to Palestinian reports, IDF troops entered into Fraides and Bayt Tamar village, near Bethlehem, and searched houses, April 25. No arrests were made.

-- According to Palestinian sources, IDF troops entered the eastern part of Nablus April 25 and conducted searches. No arrests were made.

15. (SBU) ROADBLOCKS/CHECKPOINTS:

-- According to Palestinian reports, the Israeli commander of the DCO in Nablus said April 25 that the IDF intends to remove the age restriction currently in effect for Palestinians wishing to cross the Nablus roadblocks. No date was given when this new policy will take effect.

16. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- According to Israeli media reports April 26, an agreement has been reached in principle with residents of Ganim and Kadim settlements in the northern West Bank to voluntarily leave their homes before

the implementation of disengagement in exchange for promises of increased compensation and expedited assistance in dealing with their affairs. Military officials cite the positive psychological impact that this agreement is expected to have on residents of other settlements slated for evacuation in the context of the disengagement plan.

Gaza

17. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants fired one mortar shell at Gani Tel settlement April 26.

-- Shootings: The IDF reported that militants launched a total of five shooting attacks at IDF and Israeli settler targets April 25-26.

-- Explosions: UNRWA reported that the IDF found and safely detonated an IED near the border fence with Egypt, opposite Block J, in the Rafah refugee camp

18. (SBU) INTERNAL DISPUTES:

-- UNRWA reported that five Palestinians were injured when a family dispute turned violent April 25 at al-Azhar University in Gaza City. According to Palestinian reports, members of the Wishah family used guns and knives to attack a group of students they claim assaulted their daughter.

-- UNRWA reported that Hamas and Fatah activists used guns and homemade explosives during clashes that broke out in Rafah April 25 over the upcoming municipal elections. Two Palestinians were injured.

19. (SBU) SECURITY DEPLOYMENT:

-- UNRWA reported that PA security forces clashed with PIJ members in Dayr al-Balah camp April 25. According to reports, PA police attempted to search a vehicle driven by a member of the Abu Rish Brigades and suspected of carrying weapons. Armed clashes broke out, but no injuries were reported. The police brought the situation under control and confiscated the vehicle and its contents.

110. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was open April 26, with a major detour at Netzarim Junction.

-- Erez Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers April 25, but open for internationals.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was closed April 25.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers April 26, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open April 26.

-- Rafah Terminal was open for arrivals and departures April 26.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed April 26. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi.

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<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>

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KURTZER